MEDAL of HONOR MEN

JOHN J. McCORMACK.

JOSEPH DONELLEN.

A BATHER SAVED FROM THE UNDERTOW.
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GEO. W. NELLY

HERMAN VICTOR

HARRY WILLIAMS MILLER

JOHN J. WARD

THE GOLD MEDAL.

THE SILVER MEDAL

ELMER J. KELLY

CHAS ZELLER

JOS. L. CAMPOS

DENNIS O'MEARA

Heroes Who Have Been Decorated With the United States Government Life-Saving Medal in the Past Fiscal Year — Thrilling Rescues of Men and Women Who Faced Death by Drowning— A Crippled Boy Who Saved His Mother and a Sailor Who Swam Through a Shark-Infested Sea.

Special Correspondence

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 3, 1914.

DURING the past fiscal year there were sixty-two medals of honor awarded by the United States government for efforts made toward saving persons in danger of drowning. This is the largest number of medals ever given for a like purpose during any one year since the inauguration of the movement by Congress in 1874.

Possibly not one of the thousand gold and silver symbols of bravery that were bestowed in the forty years has ever found a more meritorious placing than May 28, 1913, when Charles Zeller, a crippled boy of Brooklyn, N. Y., who saved his mother from drowning, was recognized as a hero and forwarded a silver medal by the Secretary of the Treasury.

It was in Jamaica bay, N. Y., and the lad, then a mere child, after rowing from the landing of Bergen Beach Yacht Club, with his motther and sister, drew up alongside a sloop belonging to some friends, and anchored perhaps 600 yards out. Just as the sister got on board the sloop and the mother, a very large woman, was being helped up, the skiff shot from under her, throwing the boy across the stern and his mother into the water.

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The bay was deep there and the current very strong, but the cripple sprang overboard as quickly as he had fallen, and though his waist and one leg were incased in a plaster cast which held in place a broken hip, with one arm he supported his mother against the sweep of the current and successfully used the other in a swimming motion which kept them from sinking until a ladder could be tossed over the side of the sloop and both hauled up on deck.

John J. Ward of the New York city bureau of fire prevention, while doing duty on floating engine No. 86, at the foot of Gansevoort street, one intensely dark night when there was a strong tide in North river, rescued a man named John Cochran.

It was in the winter, the windows of the fireboat were down and Ward was remarking upon the increasing cold, when cries of terror were heard without. Flinging up one of the windows, he dashed through it and, running along the stringpiece of the adjacent pier, leaped into the water near where he thought the sounds issued.

The other firemen presently recovered from their amazement, rushed to the switch and turned the searchlight on the spot where Ward had disappeared, to find that he had already reached the drowning man whose death cry they had heard. A rope was thrown out, and both brought in safely. Ward received a silver medal on the last day of the fiscal year, June 30, 1913.

In the month before, on the 19th, extreme heroism, shown in the act of Harry Williams Miller sergeant of the U. S. Marine Corps, in saving a man named Owen Gallagher from the same river, was rewarded with the gold medal.

This occurred in December, in the midst of a raw, heavy fog. The ferryboat Newark, coming out of Jersey City, was close to the foot of Cortlandt street. The sergeant, a passenger, was anxious to get into the city for an important engagement. So much, however, does military training mean that the cry of "Man overboard!" acted upon him like some sharp command of a superior officer and, without stopping to think, he leaped into the churning sea, in the very midst of the boat's propellers.

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Reaching the struggling unfortunate was difficult, for the thick mist lay on the waters as an opaque pall. With the people on deck shouting excitably, and the noise and danger of the swinging propellers, it was several minutes before Miller got to the man, drifting past the bow. Then several more minutes lagged by, during which the half-dead fellow was held up by the sergeant, before a skiff was dropped and the two men drawn into it and upon the crowded ferry again.

And while military training has much to do with daring so often observed in men of the army or navy, note the less may the loneliness of life in the service create restlessness and occasional breach of discipline. This was evidenced in the instance of a couple of mariners trying to get ashore without leave, while their ship, the U. S. S. Raleigh, lay in Colombo harbor, Ceylon, at the end of a long voyage.

They made the trial about 1 o'clock in the morning, just as George W. Nelly of Lackawanna, N. Y., was completing his watch on deck. As the sailor who would watch through the dawn came to take his place, a sharp shout of "Help!" pierced the dark silence that brushed this shelter place of the Indian sea.

Nelly, without a word, turned and ran to the gangway, his relief after him, trying to persuade him not to risk his life. But Nelly pulled away from him, and paying no attention to the cry of "For God's sake, don't jump, the water's full of sharks!" made the plunge, and commenced seeking his comrades.

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He swam for 100 yards before he could locate one of them. He was fighting to keep floating and unable to utter a sound beyond a frightened gurgle such as a helpless animal might make, when snared. As Nelly caught at him there was the swishing of a powerful fin against his foot, and in a flash he was left with only the coat of his comrade clutched in his fingers.

The other runaway was struggling just a few feet beyond. Undaunted by the tragedy he had just witnessed, Nelly swam over to his side, though aware by this time that the black waters of the harbor were really alive with man-eaters. One more stroke and the hope of rescue might have been fulfilled, but just as he reached out to seize the almost exhausted sailor there was an indescribable cry of agony—and the second man sank to his death in the jaws of a mammoth shark.

Nelly now dived repeatedly, endeavoring to find the bodies of those he had so unselfishly tried to save. But it was useless, and the Raleigh, being fully aroused by this time, shot a boat overboard, and the hero was picked up and turned over to the attention of the ship's surgeon.

He received the gold medal July 11, 1912.

August 5, 1912, silver medals were bestowed upon Dennis O'Meara and Elmer J. Kelley of the metropolitan police force of New York city for their rescue of a young girl who had thrown herself into North river at Battery Park. As it was close on to midnight, the girl perhaps did not see the policeman standing on the sea wall. Perhaps she didn't care, in the despair of the mood which made her try to take her life. But the two stalwart sons of Ireland did see, and O'Meara, in the effort to get down swiftly and into the strong tide that beat against the wall, fell and almost broke his arm.

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The girl—when he finally reached her and tried to hold her up, despite his injury—gripped him in a frenzy that defied him. Kelley, watching, and more agile than O'Meara, was on the scene in a moment. He broke the girl's hold and assisted in getting her to the base of the wall, from which she was lifted by a bystander who had chanced upon the attempt at suicide, just in time to help the rescuers complete their work.

When medical attention was secured it was found that the big bluecoats were as sorely in need of it as the slip of a girl, whom they had furnished an opportunity for another view of the game of living, and for several days they were incapacitated for duty.

Down at Lovell station, Tybee Island, Ga., two young sisters, Elsie and Josephine Robider, while in bathing one morning, ventured out too far and found themselves having to swim ashore against a strong undertow. Josephine, who was only thirteen years old, became exhausted, and her sister, in going to her assistance, saw that it was more than she could do to save both herself and Josephine, and commenced screaming for help.

They were about fifty yards beyond the line marking a wading depth, when Joseph E. Campos, jr., of Savannah, Ga., who occupied a cottage perhaps 500 yards upshore, heard the cries. Running, he rushed into the water, with all his clothes on, and swam out to them. He discovered Elsie unconscious and floating face downward, with her arm locked around the neck of her sister, whose head was a foot below the surface.

Unaware, until then, that there were two persons in danger, Campos had to think rapidly to know what to do with his double burden. But there was only one thing to do; so he started to the sands with both girls. Unconscious, they were as heavy as though they were dead. Presently he found his strength leaving and, the surf being a little more shallow, he tried to touch bottom. As the water was still over his head, this move came near losing the lives of all three.

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He has said himself that he never knew the manner in which he got back into a swimming position. But he did accomplish it, and when, still bearing both bodies, he reached a five-foot depth, he again let himself down, broke Elsie's hold about her sister's neck, took the younger girl in his arms and, pushing the other along, cried for help. He was relieved just as he was about to give up and drop his burden in the shallows, not a stone's throw away from the shore. He received a gold medal on December 10, 1912.

Two young men who could not swim chanced to fall into New York bay one night near North Atlantic dock. Col. Joseph Donellen, a soldier of fortune and a veteran of the Spanish-American war, of New York city, happened to be crossing on the ferry from New York to Brooklyn. Fully clothed, he plunged overboard after them and got a gold medal for remarkable daring. In the saving of the pair he had to beat them into insensibility.

Both men, as he reached them, seized him in that death-like vice which, it seems, only a drowning person can use. Unable to free himself, he dashed under the water with them. This broke their clutch, but as he grasped the shoulders of one the other grasped him from behind and hung about his neck so tenaciously that he had to submerge them again. The second trial was unsuccessful, and it was then, while moving one arm as if he were swimming, and thus keeping himself above water, that he beat them with his free fist into a state of unconsciousness.

Had not the very next moment brought a man running to the edge of the dock with a rope, all three would have been lost. As it was, Donellen, as well as the men he had risked his life for, was unconscious when pulled out with them. He was ill with typhoid fever for several months afterward as a result of his exposure and immersion in the polluted water.

Across the Pacific, and down amidst the Philippines, there is a lovely lake with the rhythmic name of Lanao. A sailboat in this region is little short of heavenly, for with it more pleasure to the day can be had than with any other entertainment the islands offer.

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Company F of the 6th United States Infantry was stationed at Mindanao, P. I., and five young men of the company were in the habit of using such a boat for frequent excursions in and out of the flower-bordered bayous with which Lake Lanao abounds.

One night in January, when they were returning to their station from a hunting trip, a storm blew up. There was no moon, and the wind kept rising as the heavy seas arose, until the little craft, which had been the scene of so many frolics, was tossed about like a cork on the breast of the lake.

The soldiers shouted as one man, but in the teeth of such a gale, who might hear, with the shore two miles away? Suddenly, and without the slightest warning, a sea mightier than the rest, swept over the toy craft, snapped the slim masts that swayed like saplings in the wind, and laughed as she reared and overturned.

But the soldiers caught at her and held, and one of them, Harry Hanson, dared diving under her and getting a rifle, which he fired repeatedly as a signal of distress. There was no response. The shore was dark as death. Then one of them started for land. Hanson, remembering that this man was a poor swimmer, went after him, to persuade him to wait awhile, but as he turned to obey he could not even regain the boat, and was swallowed up in the swinging of the white-topped seas.

Hanson went on toward the shore. It was two miles of terrible fighting, but, thinking only of his companions, who clung to their perilous hold, he won out. Then it was not strength but the terrible tension of purpose which took in the saving of life that enabled him to reach camp, across a jungle trail which measured another mile.

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It would have seemed that he had then come to the limit of human endurance, but he actually accompanied his commander back to the lake, and put out with him to the rescue, which occurred about four hours after the capsizing. The gold medal tendered him was surely deserved.

Herman Victor, employed at a distillery in Omaha, Neb., was given the silver medal October 31, 1912, for rescuing two children from the Missouri river.

Two little boys and a girl, while enjoying their Christmas vacation from school, were playing on the ice near the river bank where the distillery stood. It was about noon, and the sun was shining so warmly that the ice had begun to break up. The children, none of whom was yet twelve years old, did not notice this, and there was no one among the little group of cottages perched along the banks to warn them, for the women of the household were getting dinner and the whistle for the men to stop work in the distillery would not blow for several minutes.

There was not a person in sight when the pitiful cries of the little skaters drew Victor from some work in an outlying shed. He grabbed a long-handled broom that lay in the corner and, making his way cautiously to the children, now half submerged in the broken ice, quietly told them to clutch hold of that handle. The ice and water were up to his hips, and he was wedged in between two cakes of ice so closely that if the children did not at once obey him they were lost.

The youngest, chilled and terrified, was unable to follow instructions, and sank before the eyes of his brother and sister, at the very moment of their rescue. When he had carried the two into the shed he summoned assistance and, sending the two children to their mother, went back into the river and helped recover the body of the other child.

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Perhaps one of the most unique rescues of the year occurred the night of August 4, 1912, on the Hudson river. John McCormick of the fire department of New York city, and a Spanish war veteran, was at home in Inwood-on-the-Hudson, and, after an unusually strenuous day, was fast asleep. It was after midnight, and the little suburb along the river was dark and still.

But the sensitive ear of a man whose waking hours are spent in catching the first clang of fire bells is not hard to reach. So, as a cry for help suddenly rang out of the shadows of the Hudson, McCormick heard and leaped from his bed like the big, gray horses of his fire station used to jump into their harness when the gong would sound.

He ran to the edge of the river. Finding a log lying just a few feet away, he pushed it into the water. Holding to one end of it, he swam to the place the shouts were coming from. It sounded as though there were several voices, and as he approached, about 200 yards from shore, he found two men and two women clinging to an overturned canoe. They were almost exhausted and could swim so little that they had been afraid to put out to shore.

McCormick, with supreme effort, righted their boat. Placing them alongside, he then put an arm over one end of the log, and while pushing the canoe with the four young people clinging to it, managed to maintain his hold on the log and reach the shore. One of the young men then hurried away and returned with a motor boat, in which he took his companions home. McCormick was awarded a silver medal February 20, 1913.

These are only a few of the notable instances that occasioned the giving of medals for heroism in saving life from the dangers of the sea, during the last fiscal year. In the single event of the wrecked oil steamer, Rosecrans, on the Pacific coast, January 7, 1913, there were sixteen gold medals awarded surfmen of the Point Adams and Cape Disappointment life-saving stations, and in the wreck of the Margaret, on the Atlantic coast, near Stoneharbor, N. J., December 20, 1912, there were twelve gold medals tendered members of the Tathams and Avalon crews.

THE ALL-POWERFUL GERMAN POLICEMAN

THE foreigner in Germany is always struck by the extraordinary authority and the widely varying duties conferred upon the police of that country. In the United States many of the functions of the German policeman would be intrusted only to a court of law. What makes the exercise of these functions in Germany still more extraordinary is that in many cases they are performed quite independently of the local government.

The German policeman is expected not only to preserve order in the streets, but to exercise a far-reaching authority even in private houses. He will, for example, undertake the nightly locking of one's street door at a sufficiently early hour. He sees that one has his chimney regularly cleaned. He inspects, at stated intervals, the stoves and heating apparatus, and, while engaged in these inspections is as likely as not to investigate many other matters of domestic economy.

Americans have been heard to commend most heartily one feature of his activities that might well be imitated in this country. In certain German districts instrumental and vocal performances with open windows are forbidden, and it is a common house regulation in the large towns of the empire that no piano may be played after 10 o'clock in the evening.

In the long list of the German policeman's duties appear those of the food inspector. He must keep an eye on the vendors of food and of medicines. It is no unusual sight in a German town to see a policeman hold up a milkman's wagon and then and there inspect his wares. Should anything wrong appear, the milk is promptly confiscated and the matter is investigated by the higher authorities.

UNDER THE BIG WHITE DOME

Did Not Fit.

When Representative H. Sutherland of West Virginia was a lad of about fourteen he decided one spring to start out on a tramp like the boys in the Alger books. So with two friends he began a hike which comprised many weary miles and a good deal of beating his way on trains till he landed way up in the northwestern states. There he remained for the next six months, and came back home with $75 in his jeans.

Sutherland worked in a government position in Washington for many years, then went out to cast his lot amid the wilds of West Virginia. He offered his services to the campaign managers, and they were accepted, but the managers took the precaution to send him out in the sparsely settled districts to "cut his teeth."

Sutherland, in his room in the city, worked up a fine speech and memorized it perfectly. He would stay up at night for weeks declaiming to an imaginary audience. His first assignment proved to be Stubbsville, and he did not get there till late at night with this one speech.

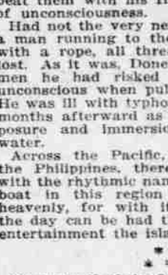
But promptly at 8 he mounted the stage, drank the customary glass of water and started. The subject was the panic of 1893. Tearing up his hair and hammering the table till one leg broke, he poured out a torrent of Niagara-like eloquence.

"Gentlemen and ladies," he shouted in winding up his mighty effort, "You all remember the time of terror that reigned then—how the engines in your factories were stilled, the wheels of your industries rusted and how along your broad streets swept the workless man, the empty dinner pail hanging on the languid army of labor, as your hungry crowds surged down these handsome avenues."

Just then he took a look at his audience—it consisted of seven men, a woman asleep with a baby in her arms, two dogs fighting in a corner, and the "broad avenue" was only a steep, muddy trail down the mountainside!

Speeches manufactured in city factories don't always fit.

Poor Preachin'.



Senator Porter J. McCumber of North Dakota is fond of automobiling. Last summer he and his secretary, Mr. Farrar, took a tour through the northern part of their state where it touches Canada and chugged for hours through lonely stretches of almost uninhabited country. One day, when about thirty miles from a town, the car was stalled by getting all four of its wheels into a rut, thus leaving the body of the machine high and dry on the dirt in the center of the road. Mr. Farrar went to a house near, borrowed a pick and dug the car out.

When he took the pick back the farmer asked them to lunch. It consisted of bread, preserves and potatoes. Wishing to donate something to the people, who seemed to be very poor, McCumber took out the only dollar bill he had—the rest of his money being in twenty-dollar notes—and gave it to a lad of five playing on the floor.

"No, sir," exclaimed the father, "we ain't going to 'low you to pay nothing for a bite to eat. But if you is anxious to help in the community, you might contribute to the church we are building."

And, as there was nothing else to do, the senator had to cough up a nice, crisp twenty for the meeting house in the pines. Expense account—$21 for a lunch of bread, preserves and cold potatoes.

The senator tells a good joke on Little Elk, an Indian preacher, who was taking temporarily the place of a minister who was away on account of illness. The marshal of the county met Little Elk and asked him to whom the salary was given. The Indian replied that it went to the sick preacher and that he got only the collections of the meetings at which he presided.

"What was your collection last Sunday, Little Elk?" asked the marshal.

"Eighty-five cents in all," replied the Indian.

"Well, I think that is darned poor pay," returned the marshal.

"Yes," replied Little Elk, "but is darned poor preach!"

A Diplomat.

Former Secretary of the Treasury MacVeagh is usually a silent individual, but he has a reserve of conversation which is of the hundred horsepower variety, as a certain constable found out to his great discomfiture not long ago. The Secretary was riding in his automobile one Sunday afternoon in Maryland, near the boundary line of the District of Columbia.

Cabinet officers are generally regarded as exempt from such petty annoyance as would arise from a constable; but this one was out for arrests, and, following the Secretary's machine, hopped on the footboard and told the Secretary he was exceeding the speed limit by about two miles.

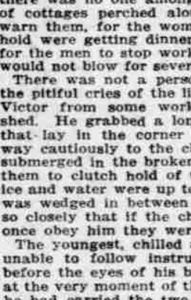
"My machine is a trifle out of order," politely returned the Secretary, "and I am afraid if I stop I cannot get it going again."

"Then I'll stick with you till you get home," returned the constable, who sized up a fat fine, of which he got half.

The Secretary drove on silently, not increasing or slackening his speed. He spoke not a word, until he had shot across the boundary line of the District of Columbia. Then he turned upon the constable and began. He used words the man had never heard before.

Finally the constable realized he was in the District of Columbia and not in Maryland, where he had some authority. Dropping to the ground, he ran as fast as he could in the opposite direction.

Midnight Oil.



Senator Atlee Pomerene of Ohio is regarded as a most serious statesman, but not an especially bashful one. In this respect he has bravely overcome a youthful failing which beset him at boarding school.

It seems he was at an academy where lamps were in use for the boys to study in their rooms at night. By accident young Pomerene broke the chimney to his. He was too timid to go to the matron and ask for another, so he adopted a plan by which nature could supply him with the needed illumination.

It happened to be the time of the month when the moon was full and the air very clear, so the bashful boy sat out on the roof, adjoining his room, studying his Greek for several nights.

At last some one of the faculty discovered the young Spartan and supplied the needed chimney. Demosthenes, speaking to the sea waves, was not in it with Pomerene studying Greek by the light of the moon!

An Analysis.

A BOSTON broker said the other day of J. Pierpont Morgan:

"We'd never have had these New Haven troubles if Morgan had lived. Morgan was a wonder. Whatever you were—banker, investor, politician—he could turn you inside out.

"Morgan, after a great victory, once said to me with a grim chuckle:

"'The financier's strength is other people's weakness.'"